

My name is Laurianne McCauley. I have been employed at the Department since 2014. During the first 6 1/2 years I was a Social Caseworker in Region 1 which is the Providence area in the Family Services Unit. I want to share my experiences as I believe there is a general misconception regarding caseloads and the families we serve.

Upon receiving a case or family, the SCW needs to immediately engage with that family, which is often at court for an arraignment. This SCW is not only meeting the children and parents involved but the grandparents, aunts/uncles, siblings, friends, and anyone associated with this family. Taking in all the necessary components into consideration. That worker then needs to set up visits, make referrals for the services, service plan, and provide whatever support this family needs. This one family could be a full-time job on their own. I am fully responsible to not only meet with the family, but the providers, other family members and of course the child without much support.

The burden of these heavy caseloads often is burnout. Or it leaves Social Workers with an attitude of just "get it done" not ultimately engaged significantly with these families in order to provide meaningful support which leads to not only a revolving door with vulnerable families but Social workers as well. This is the crux of the problem as it seems that all significant engagements and successful families rely on that meaningful support. I have firsthand knowledge of the attitude and burnout from our front-line workers, as after 6 ½ years carrying over 16 cases sometimes 20, I as a senior worker took a position in another department to escape the overwhelming burden of family services.

Our children and families deserve better.

I would be happy to discuss these concerns further if needed.

Laurianne McCauley